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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/ERA (JEFF GIAUQUE)

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SUBJECT: SPAIN'S VIEWS ON THE JUNE GAERC

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Classified By: ADCM William H. Duncan for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Poloff discussed anticipated agenda items for the June GAERC with Spanish MFA Deputy European Correspondent Maria Luisa Benitez Donoso June 10. Benitez said the two most anticipated topics for the GOS are acceptance of Guantanamo detainees and review and revision of the EU Common Position on Cuba. As of the morning of June 10, Georgia had dropped off the agenda, according to Benitez, and discussions are not anticipated on Sudan, Kosovo, Serbia, Slovenia, or Croatia unless there are new developments before the June 15 meeting. There will be discussion on the Middle East Peace Process, as well as Afghanistan/Pakistan.

12. (C) Guantanamo: Following on last month's discussions and agreed upon EU principles on detention policy, there will be continued discussion regarding common security concerns and legal implications of individual countries' decisions regarding acceptance of detainees. Benitez said that Spain agreed upon the EU policy in principle, but is strongly encouraging continued discussion. She said the GOS is still amenable to accepting detainees but has serious concerns about the legal and security implications.

13. (C) Cuba: The Common Position on Cuba is all but complete except for technical drafting issues, according to Benitez. She said that the countries generally agreed on the Common Position concepts, but a few countries (including Denmark) continued to argue over technical evaluation language. Benitez said that the negotiations on the Common Position have focused on how the EU will evaluate progress, not only in Cuba, but in other countries where human rights are a consistent concern (Belarus). The GOS argues that there has been sufficient progress in that Cuba has begun to engage in dialogue with other countries and that this dialogue must be encouraged. "We all agree they are moving in the right direction. Slower, perhaps, than we would like, but at least there has been change," Benitez opined.

14. (C) MEPP: Benitez said that Spain's views coincided with the U.S. desire to focus on the Quartet as the preeminent mechanism for coordinating international diplomatic efforts and key to any agreement reached. On Syrian engagement, Benitez reiterated that isolation of Syria would be ineffective, and that Syria has an important role in the MEPP. She added said that Syria has been lobbying EU countries, arguing for Iran's role as a regional player, and that Spain agrees that the peace process must encompass a regional perspective that incorporates all players.

15. (C) Afghanistan/Pakistan: Benitez said that discussion will be somewhat limited on Afghanistan and Pakistan and more fully addressed by the European Council on June 18. The GOS continues to study ways to approach the region, she said, discussing ways to intensify trade and agricultural

development.
CHACON